

Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Miss. Baptists continue 9/11 relief work

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

First in a series

While the tragic events of September 11 might not be in the forefront of the nation's memory as they were just a few months ago, the workers at the Fresh Kills landfill in Staten Island, New York, are reminded daily of the terrorist attacks.

For 22 volunteer members of the Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Team, the opportunity for ministry to those workers was just as timely and as needed as ever.

Covering over four miles at 400 feet above sea level, the landfill is the fourth highest point on the eastern seaboard. It is a sobering sight for anyone.

The landfill itself looks like the surface of the moon, with gray, powdered soil and chunks of brick and concrete scattered everywhere. Heavy machinery moves about like huge yellow dinosaurs.

Rubble from the World Trade Center is sorted by type — concrete and other stone in one area, wood in another area, and steel in yet another area.

Conveyer belts take smaller pieces of rubble into what looks like greenhouses, where it is sifted into still smaller pieces in the search for human remains or evidence from the attack.

On the days it rains, methane gas can be seen bubbling up through puddles standing on the surface of the landfill.

With the Army Corps of Engineers providing logistical support, Fresh Kills takes on the aspects of a small town. Along the "crest" of the landfill are scattered several mobile trailers, climate-controlled tents, a variety of sheds, and other temporary structures.

In the heart of the complex is the "Hilltop Café," a double-wide trailer that serves as the kitchen for food services,

and adjoining a huge dome-like tent which functions as a dining room.

The Corps of Engineers provided these structures, along with water, electricity, and scores of portable toilets.

The kitchen and dining tent are covered with letters, posters, photos, and other decorations sent in from school children and others from around the country. The letters and other words of encouragement are heartfelt and poignant.

Security is tight; each worker and volunteer has to have proper identification and credentials to be on the site. Because of the sensitive nature of the work being done, officials of the New York Police Department (NYPD) are Fresh Kills landfill on Staten Island in New York. (BR photo by Tony Martin)



IN MEMORIAM — The vacant site of the World Trade Center in lower Manhattan, also known as Ground Zero, stands in mute testimony to the tragedy of September 11. The steel girders found in the shape of a cross can be seen at right. (BR photo by Tony Martin)

justifiably cautious about photographs being taken. One NYPD lieutenant said, "We've been up here for over nine months and we've got a job that has to be done, but my men and the others are just physically and emotionally exhausted."

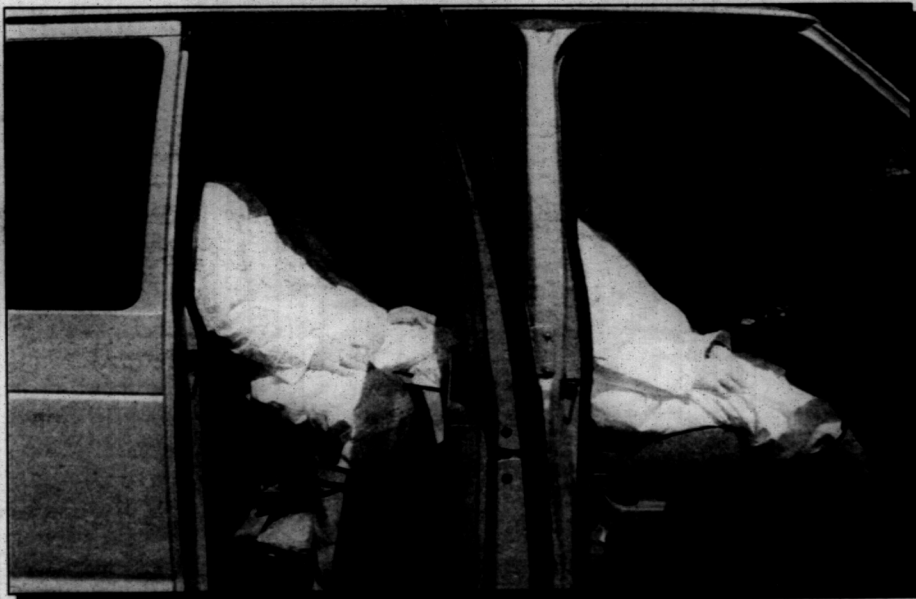
The Salvation Army is responsible for the kitchen and its equipment — convection ovens, steam tables, refrigerated trailers, and other food service needs. Daily deliveries of food, drinks, water, and other provisions are stored and retrieved as needed.

Most of the food is pre-cooked in large aluminum trays, to be heated and served on the steam tables. Food is

available all throughout the day with breakfast items available up until lunchtime, when other entrees and side dishes are phased onto the serving lines. Additionally, there are plenty of soft drinks, fruits, pastries, and other snack items available round the clock.

The Mississippi Baptist disaster relief teams on the two shifts were responsible not only for food preparation and service, but for cleanup of the dining area, receiving food deliveries, and for being sensitive toward any counseling opportunities — which were plentiful.

Next week: Mississippi Baptist offer listening ear to New Yorkers.



FOR PROTECTION — Tim Kyle (left) of Kosciusko, and Jerry Thornhill of Raymond, don protective Tyvek suits, respirators, and rubber boots in preparation for restocking the hydration stations on the Fresh Kills landfill on Staten Island, New York, during the Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Team's work there on June 5-13. (BR photo by Tony Martin)

WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

Did Pledge dad lie?

Directions

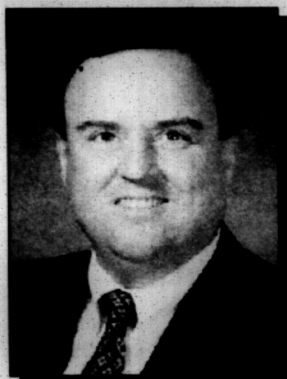
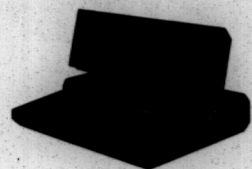
Sunday school lessons

Baptist Children's Village



READY TO SERVE — Bobby Kennedy of Wesson takes a moment to prepare for the first group of workers expecting breakfast at the "Hilltop Café" at the Fresh Kills landfill on Staten Island in New York. (BR photo by Tony Martin)

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Our courts can do better

By the time most Americans reach adulthood, a deep respect and appreciation for the courts of our country have been firmly implanted. The court system is where we demand justice when we have been wronged. The court system is our resort when we would rather get into a shooting war with our neighbors, like the Hatfields and McCoys.

The courts protect our inalienable rights as citizens of this country. They impose restraint when necessary and free us to be ourselves at other times. We do very little to earn or deserve such a system; it is ours and we are entitled to it by mere geographical accident of birth.

The vast majority of judges in our country serve with character and integrity, as indicated by the rare cases of corruption that are infrequently brought against errant jurists. We should all appreciate what the courts in their finest hours have done for the betterment of this country.

Something is wrong, though. The courts are being gamed by people with hidden agendas and perverse motivations, and it seems that some judges lamely go along for the ride. Evil people are willing to short circuit the court system for their own ends, and it's past time we understood that fact.

The latest case study in a growing disease is Michael A. Newdow, the San Francisco physician/attorney and atheistic activist who handed the Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals the opportunity to strike the phrase, "under God," from the Pledge of Allegiance (see page four of this issue).

According to several news sources — but not the mainstream newspapers and broadcasters — Newdow lied when he insisted in his lawsuit against the Pledge that his plaintiff daughter had been harmed by having to repeat the phrase, "under God," when reciting the Pledge at her school.

It turns out that Newdow's daughter is a practicing Christian and has no objection to the Pledge, repeating it voluntarily in her class each day at her school in Elk Grove. Several news sources have also reported that both his daughter and his ex-wife (the girl's mother and also a Christian) pleaded with Newdow not to file the lawsuit.

"This is more about me than her," Newdow has since admitted to Fox News.

Aside from the allegation that Newdow committed perjury to advance his crusade against religion, there is another troubling aspect to this case. Apparently, the courts did nothing to check out Newdow's sworn statement that his daughter was being injured by saying the Pledge at school. The judges of the Ninth Circuit took him at his word, in order to be able render the judgment they wanted. The judges obviously didn't feel they needed the facts before they handed down their ruling.

This case has haunting similarities to *Doe v. Bolton*, the companion lawsuit to *Roe v. Wade* that helped cement the destruction of a third of the generation of Americans conceived after those two cases legalized abortion.

As Sandra Cano — the real-life *Doe* in *Doe v. Bolton* — told a gathering at Trinity Church in Southaven last year, she refused to be involved in the lawsuit from the start and demanded to be removed.

The activist lawyers intent on legalizing abortion on demand simply ignored her and proceeded up the legal chain until they received the ruling they wanted from the U.S. Supreme Court.

**"I LOOK AT IT LIKE THIS — IF
THEY CAN'T SAVE THEMSELVES,
I'M NOT SURE HOW MUCH
GOOD THEY CAN DO US!"**



Apparently, no one in the court system bothered to check with Sandra Cano, either, and one suspects many of our courts' most socially- and spiritually-destructive rulings have been decided in similar fashion.

It's time to stop this misplaced judicial activism. Judges should return to their constitutionally-mandated responsibilities and stop thwarting the will of the people as expressed by the Republic's legislators.

The judges in our judicial system are too important to the system to be unaccountable. Pray about this issue — pray particularly for our judges, that they would seek God's wisdom before handing down a ruling — and then get involved in making our court system better.

Too much is at stake to turn away now.

Our church has found a new way to say the Pledge of Allegiance. When we get down to "one nation under God," we literally shout the last two words of the phrase.

I confess here and now it feels good to do it that way. If atheists have the right not to say those words (and they do) then the rest of us have the right to emphasize them.

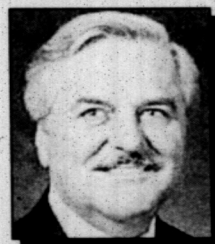
We are indebted to a fellow in California who brought the suit about the pledge and to a couple of oddball San Francisco judges for unifying America. When is the last time the Senate voted 99-0 on anything?

A national poll says 87% of the American people want the words "under God" to remain in the pledge. Americans have drawn a line in the sand that says, "This far, and no farther."

It's been pointed out about 800 times in recent days that every allegiance-pledger has his or her own interpretation of "under God." Here is mine.

When I say "one nation under God," I mean we are indebted to Almighty God for America and the privilege of living here. No one now living hammered out the freedoms and safeguards which make America distinctive among the

GUEST OPINION:



**...And I do mean,
'Under God'**

*By Joe McKeever, pastor
First Church, Kenner, La.*

nations of the world. She was already great when we arrived.

We salute the flag and applaud our service men and women and pray for our leaders, but somehow it just doesn't seem enough.

It feels like we ought to thank someone, and so we give honor to the Father in heaven, who for reasons of his own chose to bless this nation above all nations of the world.

When I say "one nation under God," I mean that no matter how much we bend over backward to accommodate citizens of all religions and no religion in this country, this is still a nation of believers, of people who take God seriously and pray to him.

Millions call the president's name in prayer every day. The heart of America is not a government building somewhere,

but a child kneeling by the bed at night saying his prayers. The strength of America is its churches. The hope of America is the people who turn their hearts toward heaven and worship Almighty God.

When I say "one nation under God," I mean God is the sovereign ruler of the universe, that he is in charge and we are accountable to him. Every nation of the world will someday stand before God and give account.

This is the fact; it's not an opinion or denominational doctrine or debatable. It's not up for a vote and nothing the polls say changes anything. All nations are "under God."

Saying "one nation under God" means I for one am determined that Almighty God shall not be ignored or denied or impeached. He cannot be voted

out of office or evicted from his throne. The courts of this land get it right sometimes and miss it altogether at others, but no decision they make will change my loyalty to God and this country.

I will pray to my Heavenly Father and will exercise my constitutional freedom to worship and speak out publicly and witness to my neighbor about Jesus Christ.

I am registered to vote and I do, even when nothing monumental is on the ballot and most voters find other things to do. I donate money to candidates in which I have confidence. I will support elected leaders who lead us faithfully and work to oust any who betray our trust or lead us astray.

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation UNDER GOD! indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

McKeever, a former Mississippi pastor, is a regular columnist and editorial cartoonist for Baptist Press. A collection of McKeever's cartoons dealing with the Pledge of Allegiance, along with the latest news on the Pledge lawsuit in California, can be found on page four of this issue.

TruthQuest team geared up for road trip

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Hundreds of teens gathered for a TruthQuest rally July 11 meant to be the last surge of encouragement before the 12 teens headed off to California the next morning for 1,200 miles of ministry.

TruthQuest: California is a joint ministry project involving Baptist Press, FamilyNet Television, and the Broadman & Holman publishing arm of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

The TruthQuest team includes Katie Royals, a member of First Church, Jackson.

For 10 days, the students will write stories about and participate in cutting-edge ministry in California. Their stories will appear in Baptist Press and their adventures will be chronicled in a 13-episode television series to air on FamilyNet this fall.

Will Hall, vice president for news services for the SBC Executive Committee and executive editor of Baptist Press, opened the rally at First Church in Franklin, Tenn., with a challenge from Scripture. In Acts 8:29-31, he recounted, the Ethiopian eunuch asked Philip how he can understand the Scripture unless someone guides him.

"The search for truth truly is timeless," he said, adding that just as the eunuch needed help in finding the truth, young people today need help from committed Christians such as the TruthQuesters in finding the same truth of Jesus Christ.

The 12 teens were introduced, and some answered questions about why they are eager to embark on the TruthQuest adventure.

Richard Sparkman commented on the difference between the TruthQuest reality show and MTV's "Road Rules."

"Road Rules is all about sex and drugs and alcohol, but that's

not reality for most teenagers," said Sparkman, a member of the host church. "We're going to have a Christian theme in our show. It's going to be exactly like Road Rules except no sex, no drugs, and no violence and stuff like that, and no eating worms."

Sarah Brown of Youngstown, Ohio, admitted that the TruthQuesters are not "super-spiritual," as some might think. "We do have Christ in our hearts, but there can be times when there's a little bit of conflict," she said.

"For the most part we keep it real, and since Christ is a part of our lives he is obviously a part of this trip."

Jason Perry of the Christian pop band Plus One spoke to the teens and then sang.

"There are three things you're going to have to have in order to touch your generation or change any part of your culture," Perry said. "You're going to have to be relevant, relatable, and real."

Jake, a rising Christian band, sang "Army of Love," the title cut from their latest CD, along with their hit song "Waiting."

Andy Botts, a member of the TruthQuest team from Cleveland, Tenn., sang a song called "One Desire," which he wrote specifically for TruthQuest. The song tells of his desire "to see lives being touched, hearts being changed and people's hopes and dreams completely rearranged"



ON A QUEST — Cara Yates (left) of Cleveland, Tenn., is joined by fellow TruthQuest team members (from left) Shanna Hawkins of Winston-Salem, N.C., Sarah Brown of Youngstown, Ohio, and Katie Royals, a member of First Church, Jackson, during a July 7 rally in Cleveland. (BP photo by Justin Veneman)

through the message TruthQuesters will present during their 10 days of ministry.

Teens then heard a message about the magnificence of God from Steve Keels, editor of the TruthQuest Student Bible. He spoke of his desire to see teenagers walk in the depths of God, to go beyond a surface Bible study and claim God for who he says he is.

"I believe God is not in the business of only sharing the gospel. I believe God is in the business of changing your life and revealing your life to people that don't know Christ," said Keels, pastor of student ministries at Good Shepherd Community Church, Boring, Ore.

Satan is dependent on the existence of God, but the power of our Father is dependent on no one, Keel said, exhorting the teens to see God fully in their lives and to boast of their Dad based on his magnificence as recorded in Scripture.

Teens at the rally were excited about the TruthQuest team and what they are going to do through their ministry trip.

MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE

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"I think it will be a lot of fun and they will have awesome opportunities to minister to all kinds of people," said Katie Wright, 14, of First Church, Franklin. "I'd be a TruthQuester if I had the chance."

After the rally, Perry had more to say about the TruthQuest team. "I think it's exciting to see 12 young people who are excited about God, who are excited about testifying to his love and goodness to a generation that is at a distance from God," he said.

"We are ultimately on a quest to find the truth — and to know that these young people are going out there to minister to young people who are looking for answers is very exciting," he said.

The TruthQuesters can be tracked at www.sbc Baptist Press.org.

Looking back

10 years ago

Gary Leazer, director of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's Interfaith Witness department, takes a three-month leave to produce a study comparing Masonic lodge teachings with Christian doctrine. Masonic lodges in America have some 3.5 million members.

20 years ago

Over 65,000 people visit the Baptist Pavilion at the 1982 World's Fair in Knoxville, Tenn., during its first month of operation. Said David Peach, executive director of Baptist Ministries at the fair, "Several decisions have been made and Scripture portions in 15 languages have been distributed."

50 years ago

Leon Macon, editor of the Alabama Baptist, writes: "It appears that every effort to bring about doctrinal unity in the Convention will result in division... The Convention has every right to consider some individual church's lack of conformity looking toward correction... or withdrawing fellowship..."

Belarus bill stalls

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Efforts in Belarus to pass a repressive religion bill fell short June 28 when the parliament's current session ended, Keston News Service reported. The bill — which would be the most repressive religion law in any former Soviet republic other than Turkmenistan or Uzbekistan — will return to the parliament's two chambers in October, unless a special session of parliament is called in the interim. According to Keston, the bill would outlaw unregistered religious activity; introduce compulsory prior censorship for all religious literature; restrict publishing, education, and charitable activity to faiths that had 10 registered communities in 1982; and ban all but occasional small religious meetings in private homes. Leaders of four main Protestant communities in Belarus — Baptists, Pentecostals, Full Gospel Church, and Adventists — along with leaders of minority faiths, have sharply criticized the bill, Keston reported. Meanwhile, the Belarusian Orthodox Church under the Moscow Patriarchate — the biggest denomination in Belarus with more than 1,200 registered parishes — has backed the bill unequivocally. A move to rush the bill to passage, in an 82-2 June 27 vote in the lower Chamber of Representatives — just a day after it had been postponed until the fall — failed to push the bill into the upper Council of the Republic. German Rodov, head of the Bible Society in Belarus, declared in a June 27 statement issued to Keston, "... today I have the impression that in taking these decisions the deputies are completely ignoring the views of tens of thousands of Belarusian citizens. This law is a fiasco for the Chamber of Representatives as a parliament and testimony to its bankruptcy."

Research on aborted babies draws ire

WASHINGTON (BP) — Some pro-life leaders are calling on President Bush to seek to prevent federal funding of research on stem cells from unborn children aborted as much as eight weeks after conception. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) approved in May the first federal grant for such experimentation on stem cells from fetuses, the Chicago Tribune reported.

Some pro-life advocates said the president still should act decisively to try to reverse that policy. "The administration simply must rein in the NIH," said Ben Mitchell, a biomedical consultant for the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission in Nashville.

Ken Connor, president of the Family Research Council in Washington, D.C., urged the president in a letter not to permit "the actions of federal bureaucrats in your administration to reduce your rhetoric to mere empty words." The fetal stem cell grant "runs cross grain to your stated positions on abortion, fetal-tissue research, and stem cell research, Connor told Bush.

NIH's May grant of \$150,000 went to a team headed by John Gearhart at Johns Hopkins University, the Tribune reported. A Gearhart-led team was one of two to discover stem cells in 1998. His team separated stem cells from unborn babies that had been aborted at five to eight weeks of development.

Calif. Pledge plaintiff accused of perjury

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — The California plaintiff who filed suit against the Pledge of Allegiance committed perjury, according to reports in several media outlets. Michael A. Newdow "lied to the court under oath," Austin Miles, a chaplain and college instructor in northern California wrote in a column carried by ASSIST News Service and Crosswalk.com.

According to Miles and reports carried on the websites of WorldNetDaily, the home-school news site www.cpinews.net and Christianity Today — and over the Fox News channel — Newdow was untruthful in alleging that his 8-year-old daughter had been "injured" by Pledge of Allegiance recitations in her elementary school declaring that the United States is "one nation under God."

Newdow's daughter and ex-wife, in actuality, are members of an evangelical church in California, Calvary Chapel of Laguna Creek in Elk Grove — and they have no objection to the Pledge of Allegiance, according to the news reports.

Chuck Smith, leader of the Calvary Chapel movement in Santa Ana, Calif., told a Sunday night congregation there June 30 that Newdow's claims of harm to his daughter are "totally false. She loves the Lord," cpinews.net reported July 1.

Smith noted "that this whole suit was filed on a totally false premise."

The pastor also stated, "The little girl, over whom the suit was filed, happens to attend Calvary Chapel in Elk Grove. She is Christian, her mother is a Christian."

Baptist Press confirmed Smith's comments in a call to the Santa Ana church July 9.

The three-judge panel of the

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit apparently accepted Newdow's allegations without questioning their validity.

In their June 26 ruling against the Pledge of Allegiance, the three federal judges stated that Newdow "claims that his daughter is injured when she is compelled to watch and listen as her state-employed teacher in her state-run school leads her classmates in a ritual proclaiming that there is a God, and that our's [sic] is 'one nation under God.'"

After that quotation, the panel proceeded to spin out its stance against the pledge in 30 pages of legal argumentation. Facing a nationwide firestorm of protest, the court blocked its ruling the next day, June 27, to permit the full court's 28 judges to weigh in on the matter.

The mother and daughter pleaded with Newdow, a 49-

year-old emergency room physician and lawyer in Sacramento, not to file the suit against the Pledge of Allegiance, cpinews.net and WorldNetDaily reported.

Newdow, in an interview with Fox News, acknowledged that his daughter had been voluntarily saying the Pledge of Allegiance in her second-grade class in the Elk Grove (Calif.) school district. "This is more about me than her," he told Fox. "I'd like to keep her out of this."

To the Associated Press, Newdow asserted, "It's my parental right to keep the government off my child."

In a June 27 USA Today article, Newdow asserted that his daughter and other family members had faced threats because of his suit, but he declined to talk further about his daughter, except that she was "in a safe place."

Austin Miles, in his column, wrote, "The public must demand that the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco charge Michael Newdow with perjury and punish him to the full extent of the law. The law applies to everyone, even liberals."

Newdow's daughter "was not emotionally injured or damaged in any way as falsely claimed by her absent father, Michael Newdow," in order to deceive the court into making this insane ruling," Miles wrote. "Furthermore, Newdow stated this over CNN: 'The only way I could file this case was to use my daughter as a hook.'"

The text of the Ninth Circuit's Pledge of Allegiance ruling can be accessed on the Internet at <http://news.findlaw.com/usatoday/docs/con-law/newdowus62602opn.pdf>.

Aultmans to serve in national role

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (Special) — The North American Mission Board (NAMB) recently appointed Mississippians Larry and Donna Aultman to serve in national mobilization.

Larry Aultman will travel throughout North America in this assignment; however, the couple will live in Alpharetta, Ga.

A native of Hattiesburg, Larry Aultman is a graduate of William Carey College in Hattiesburg and Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth.

He served as senior pastor of Buck Creek Church, Richton, from 1968-69. He was a missionary journeyman to Salima, Malawi, Africa, with the International Mission Board from 1969-71. From 1973-74, he served as minister of youth for

Hilltop Drive Church in Irving, Texas, and from 1974-76, he was minister of education at Hilltop Drive Church.

From 1976-82, he was senior pastor of First Church, Little Elm, Texas. He became pastor of First Church, Gladwater, Texas, in 1982, and remained there until 1987, when he became pastor of First Church, Alpharetta, Ga. He served as pastor of that congregation until earlier this year.

Donna Aultman is a native of Bristol, Tenn. She is a graduate of Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn., and Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

She has been a public school teacher for many years and currently teaches first grade at Crabapple Crossing

Elementary School in Alpharetta.

The couple have two children, Jessica and Joel.



The Aultmans

Cartoonist McKeever speaks out on Pledge controversy

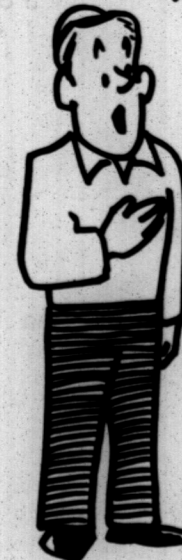
"LORD, FORGIVE US FOR WANTING ALL THE BLESSINGS AND GIVING YOU NONE OF THE CREDIT."



"WHEN I'M CONFUSED ABOUT ISSUES FACING OUR COUNTRY, I JUST PRAY ABOUT IT, THEN TAKE THE OPPOSITE POSITION THE A.C.L.U. IS ON. I HAVEN'T BEEN WRONG YET!"



"I SAID UNDER GOD AND I MEAN UNDER GOD!"



Latest Vessels features black, rural churches

JACKSON, Miss. (Special) — The Spring 2002 edition of Vessels, Mississippi Baptist's video magazine, is now available for distribution. Featured on the video are visits to four of the 30 African-American churches in the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC) and a segment on rural church growth.

The range of ministries in MBC's African-American churches is spotlighted, along with an evangelistic approach that centers on Christ's love for all people. Churches involved in the Vessels report include Mt. Olive in Hattiesburg, Gateway in Lumberton, Grace Temple in Gulfport, and Mt. Sinai in Tupelo.

Rural church growth is the subject of another Vessels segment in which Antioch Church

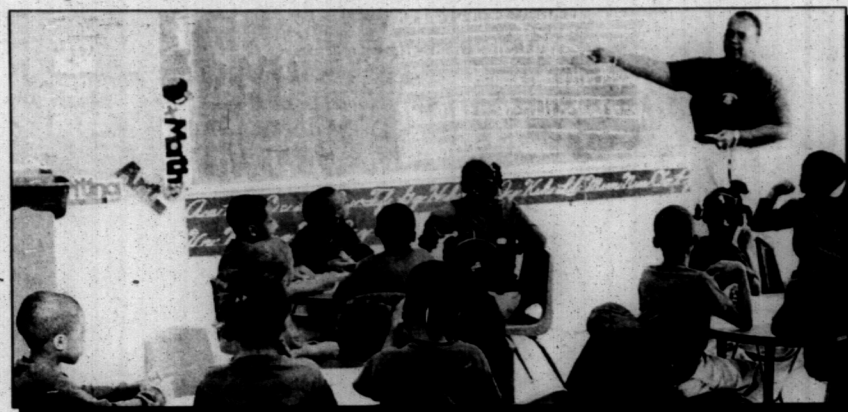
in Greene County is studied. Church members point to a focus on prayer and intense Bible study as two of the underlying reasons for growth. Jimmy Holcomb is pastor of the expanding congregation.

The new edition of Vessels (Vol. 8, No. 1) is available for loan through Communication Services at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) in Jackson. The new edition is also available for loan from local MBCB members, Baptist associations, and area coordinators for Men's Ministry, Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union, and prayer.

For more information on the current edition of Vessels or any previous editions of the video magazine, contact Ian Richardson, MBCB communi-

cation services director, at P.O. 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3290 or

toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 290. E-mail: irichardson@mbcb.org.



PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT — Instructor Teresa Young (at blackboard) leads in recitation during class at Mt. Olive Christian School in Hattiesburg. The school is one of the African-American church's ministries highlighted in the Spring 2002 edition of Vessels, the video magazine of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. (BR photo by Tim Nicholas)

RTVC pioneer Stevens dies at age 86

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — Paul M. Stevens, 86, the man credited with shaping the Baptist Radio and Television Commission (RTVC) into one of the most influential forces in religious broadcasting during his tenure as president from 1953-1977, died the morning of July 10.

Stevens had recently suffered a major heart attack while in surgery and never fully recovered, said David Clark, who currently holds Stevens' office as president of FamilyNet Inc. and vice president for broadcast communications of the North American Mission Board.

Stevens had a goal of becoming a physician when he entered Baptist-affiliated Mississippi College in Clinton as an undergraduate, but after turning to Christ in 1935 and being called to ministry he transferred to Baylor University in Waco, Texas. After his ordination, he served as a chaplain in the U.S. Air Force from 1942-46 with the 450th Bomber Group based in England and Italy.

Many of the RTVC's core strategies for reaching the nation through broadcasting were birthed by Stevens, including Powerline, Country Crossroads, and Master Control. The programs are still core offerings today, airing free of charge on more than 1,500 stations around the country.



Stevens

REJOICING IN A ROOT CANAL

Dateline: Monday, 8 a.m.
Location: Dentist's Office
Problem: Root Canal

Have you ever struggled with those verses that the Apostle Paul gave us about rejoicing in all things, all the time? You know the verses, "Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice" (Phil. 4:4). "In all things give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thess. 5:18). Well, I confess that there are times when, for me, those verses don't seem to be appropriate for the occasion.

Recently, one of those times came when I was scheduled for a root canal to start my week. I showed up right on time and found that the endodontist was far more anxious to get this procedure underway than I was. I have a natural phobia about dentists anyway, but to start your week being treated like you get treated when having a root canal is a little much! Now, don't get me wrong, my dentist is a great guy, a fine Christian, and a likeable person, but he is a dentist and there I was - his first victim of the week.

Abiding by the Scriptures, I joyfully went in and took my seat in the "chair of torture." Before anything got underway, I began to wonder, "Does the Lord honestly mean for me to rejoice in these circumstances?" My theological answer quickly came back and said, "Yes, he really does! Now, before you get any gas, or a shot, or anything else, just lie back and rejoice!" So, for the next hour and a half I honestly sought to keep a joyful, happy spirit.

I had been able to rejoice most of the weekend leading up to my dental visit because I knew whatever might happen, things were going to get worse. I mean, throughout the weekend I continued to think, "This really isn't bad compared to how bad it's gonna get!" Whether it was dressing up to go to a wedding on Saturday afternoon, or



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

preaching a bad sermon, or having to deal with a difficult situation at work, or having to work in the yard - I could honestly say, "This isn't bad, because in just a matter of hours it's really going to get bad - I'm going to have a root canal!" I guess another way to express that thought was to reverse it, which I did with my dentist when he came into the room. I told him, "This is a great way to start the week. Begin your Monday morning with a root canal and you can really look forward to the rest of the week only getting better!"

To put all of this into a context that we can all relate to, maybe what we need to do is simply trust the Lord and enjoy the moment he gives, knowing there may be bad things down the road, but also realizing that whatever is happening, life can get better!

On that Monday morning, I also learned that I could rejoice in the Lord even though I never got to speak my peace. Communication is a tough thing in a dentist's chair! I read once that some dentists have emotional and even mental problems. Well, I can certainly understand why. They live in a strange world of mis-communication and non-communication.

This nice dentist put both of his hands and a syringe in my mouth! Sticking me repeatedly, he asked, "Does that hurt?" Unable to speak, I grunted, "Uuh, uuh!" and he kept doing what he was doing. Then he put a miniature trampoline appliance in my mouth and around the tooth and asked me, "Is it okay?" I lay there with what seemed like an umbrella sticking out of my mouth and

again grunted, "Uuh, uuh!" Soon he began his work and as he drilled and probed he said, "I sure enjoyed your article in The Baptist Record last week." With a drill, the miniature trampoline appliance, and two hands in my mouth, I grunted, "Uuh, uuh!" He then asked me about a mutual friend of ours who is also a dentist and once again I grunted, "Uuh, uuh!"

I found that it's terribly frustrating when you never get to say your piece. I had a lot of thoughts I wanted to express about our mutual friend and about the article that I had written the week before. I also had some questions about this root canal I was getting, but I was not able to effectively communicate any of these things to him, although I'm assuming he thought I was. I began to think of this communication problem from my dentist's perspective. Can you imagine spending every hour of your working day communicating with people whose only response is, "Uuh, uuh!"? I'm sure he felt that there were times when he didn't get his point across, and probably, at times, felt as though he was communicating with a less than intelligent person. Yet, in spite of which side of the chair you find yourself, the Lord has provided that we can still trust him and have a degree of joy.

Another thing I found to be true on that morning of the root canal is that oftentimes it hurts to be helped. That is a painful lesson that many people never learn, but it is true. God certainly understands that truth,

and implements it in all of our lives. A mom and a dad are wise parents when they realize that at times their children have to experience discomfort in order to find more permanent comfort. It is far better to be caringly honest than it is to be lovingly deceptive.

Through the years I have watched parents as they have gone to great lengths to keep their children from experiencing any pain or hurt over circumstances in life only to set them up for greater pains and hurts when they face situations later. God, our Heavenly Father, allows things to come into our lives that will challenge us, strengthen us, and even broaden our understanding, even though it may be hurtful at the moment. Even a surface understanding of Paul's "thorn in the flesh" helps you and me to understand that at times, when we are experiencing something painful, God may be doing something much larger than we are able to see or comprehend. The Lord, like my fine dentist, is there not to hurt me but to help me through the hurts.

One final thing that caused me to rejoice on that Monday morning was the reassurance I received even in a dental chair - that the promises of God are true. "I will never leave you nor forsake you," said my Jesus, and I can tell you that he is true to his Word. I know that compared to some of the things that many of you are facing, even this very week, a root canal is a walk in the park. Yet, God's truth remains, "I will be with you."

He will be with you in accidents or accomplishments; in your blessings or in your burdens; and, in your crises or your celebrations. He will face them with you. I can say without reservation that I have yet to find a place or space when the Lord has not come to care, help, guide, and provide, so I will gladly rejoice, even in a root canal!

Homecomings

Hurley, Hurley: July 28; worship through song with Damon Westfaul, 10 a.m.; worship service, Jeff Childers preaching, 11 a.m.; dinner on the grounds following morning worship service.

Mt. Zion (Simpson): July 21; 10:30 a.m.; noon meal; Darren Wigington, preaching; Mitchell Roberts, music; Joel Eavenson, pastor.

Anding, Bentonia: July 28; celebrating 100 years; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 10:45 a.m.; Andy May, morning and afternoon message to commemorate the special event; Joe K. Hill, pastor.

Springfield, Natchez: July 28; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; covered dish luncheon and singing; Marvin Cobb, message; Gene Rowland, pastor.

Adam Walley, 16, was licensed to the ministry on May 12 at First Church, Waynesboro. He is the son of DeJuan Walley, pastor of First Church, Waynesboro.



DeJuan and Adam Walley

Anding Church, Bentonia, ordained Terry Dozier as deacon on April 14. Pictured (from left) are Glynn Martin; E. L. Douglas, chairman; Dozier; and Joe K. Hill, pastor.

Puckett Church, Rankin County, recently licensed Wes Gunter of Puckett to the ministry. Pictured are Gunter and Grant McElveen, pastor.



Gunter and McElveen

Walker Hill Church, Brandon, recently presented Jo Nash a plaque for 50 years of service as pianist. Churches she also served as pianist were Crooked Creek, Cato, and Rock Hill. Nash was presented 50 red roses, one rose for each year of service from her husband and three sons. Pictured (from left) are Nash and Sandi Sartor, music director at Walker Hill Church.



Nash and Sartor



Martin, Douglas, Dozier, and Hill

THANK YOU FROM BAPTIST HOMES, INC.

FOR YOUR ON-GOING SUPPORT OF OUR FIRST PROJECT.
PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR SON VALLEY.

Eighty acres donated in Madison County will be developed into a Christian community for persons with mental retardation.

Facilities will include living arrangements, workshop, recreational facilities, administration facility, and chapel.

Until the facilities are constructed, Baptist Homes, Inc. will assist with needs of persons with mental retardation.

We can offer information and referral services, counseling, speaker for WMU, brotherhood or other mission groups, and our prayers for you and your family.

All Board of Directors of Baptist Homes, Inc. are Christians who are members of churches associated with the Mississippi Baptist Convention. Baptist Homes, Inc., however, is not a Mississippi Baptist Convention Board agency and is not governed nor financially supported by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

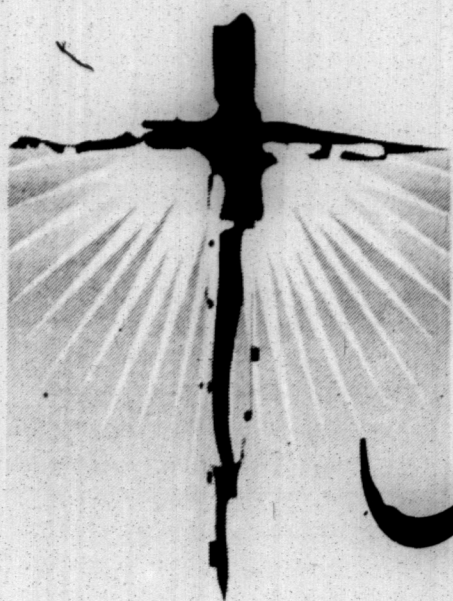
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We want to also thank Dr. Bill Causey and Mississippi Representative Robert Clark for making our Property Dedication Day so successful.



MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST

Missions Mobilization

VOL. III, NO. II



SUMMER QUARTER 2002

♦ MISSIONS MOBILIZATION DEPARTMENT ♦ P.O. BOX 530, JACKSON, MS 39205-0530 ♦ PHONE (601) 292-3398 ♦ FAX (601) 292-3390 ♦ E-MAIL KRHODES@MBCB.ORG

PURPOSE:
TO PROVIDE AN
OPPORTUNITY FOR
VOLUNTEERS
TO USE THEIR SKILLS
TO WITNESS FOR CHRIST
THROUGH MISSION
PARTNERSHIPS.

Keels' Kenyan trip whets missions appetite

By Tim Nicholas, writer
MBCB Communication Services

During a missions emphasis at Heritage Church in Lucedale, Buddy and Mary Keel of the nearby Basin community told their pastor Roger Gilbert they were ready to go anywhere, anytime the Lord wanted them to go.



Buddy and Mary Keel of Heritage Church, Lucedale, experienced the blessing of short term missions in Kenya.

The next evening the couple mentioned their commitment to a participant in the emphasis, Ken Rhodes, Missions Mobilization director for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. "How about Kenya?" asked Rhodes.

"As in Africa?" asked Mary Keel.

"Get your passports," said Ken.

Nine days later they had their passports and were in Kenya from April 19 - May 10. Part of the Keels' expenses came out of Mississippi's Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering utilized for voluntary mission assignments. Their station

was at Brackenhurst, a 160-acre compound serving as a conference center and language school just outside Nairobi.

Buddy, for 36 years an independent stonemason contractor, worked with a Kenyan crew to build a chapel in the compound. Mary served as "grandmother" and cook.

She took care of children while their missionary parents were in a conference and taught the chef how to cook certain things. "I made hushpuppies and almost caused a riot," she confided.

At the compound which has its own cows for milk,

Mary made creamy potato soup, ratcheting up the taste of its water-based predecessor. She imported her version of baked beans.

The head chef told her, "You come back and you are going to stay in the kitchen."

Buddy said he wonders if he accomplished enough for the money spent. "I wouldn't take anything for what I learned about masonry work and I went over to teach them. Instead, they taught me."

Many of the Keels' experiences were humbling, they said. At a Maasai church in the Rift Valley, "the whole church wasn't as big as my

kitchen," said Mary. The only padded seats were on the front row where the Keels, as guests, had to sit. "You could feel the spirit there," said Mary.

Eight years ago Buddy and Mary were like a lot of Christians. They had drifted away from the church, "for no good reason," said Buddy.

In their car one day, Mary asked him, "If you were going to church, where would you go?"

"You've been thinking about it, too?" he responded.

The couple visited Heritage Church where they immediately felt at home. Today, he's a deacon and Sunday School teacher. She's Woman's Missionary Union chairman. He's been on several church building mission trips.

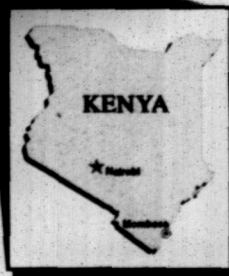
Three years ago, she accompanied him to West Virginia for a bricklaying project where she served as cook.

"The past eight years," said Buddy, "have been the best years of my life ... I've tried to have a new commitment every day."

The couple went to Kenya with the possibili-



Kenya is located in east Africa. The eastern border is on the Indian Ocean.



Buddy Keel (left), for 36 years an independent stonemason contractor and missions volunteer, worked with Charles (right) and other Kenyans to build a chapel at Brackenhurst, a 160-acre compound serving as a conference center and language school just outside Nairobi.



ty that if they liked the work, they could return for a longer assignment.

Both appear ready. "If the door opens up, we'll go back," said Buddy.

"It's hard to put into words," said Mary. "All I can think of is going back, hopefully soon, to do whatever."

New name reflects MBCB volunteer mobilization vision

By Ken Rhodes, director
MBCB Missions Mobilization

On July 1, the Partnership Missions Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board became the Missions Mobilization Department. The abbreviation will be MMob. We ask for your patience as we begin using our new name.

The name Missions Mobilization gives recognition to the expanding strategies of facilitating volunteers to many areas of the world. The breadth of our involvement through mobilization is an ever-increasing opportunity for Mississippi Baptists.

Help us spread the news of our name change with a renewed commitment to mobilization.

On mission – God is at work

"Notice their varied backgrounds – brick mason, school teacher, homemaker, psychologist, nurse, pastor."

– Ken Rhodes, director
MBCB Missions
Mobilization
Department

God is moving among Mississippi Baptists to call out volunteers to the awesome opportunities of missions. These individuals come from all walks of life with numerous background experiences.

My own experience is one of humility being in position to see God at work in these volunteers' lives. Just in the last few days several folks have said we are available and trust you to send us where we need to go. Overwhelming to say the least, yet God works to bring about unbelievable connections.

For this edition of the Missions Mobilization Newsletter you will meet the Keels who have returned from their first international mission experience, but not the last.

God moved in their hearts. They responded and the Missions Mobilization staff shared in being used to make the connection. Their local church and association gave excellent support.

Jimmy and Sue Albritton were packed and headed for Maine, when at the last

minute the door closed. The Albrittons were committed to volunteer and God immediately – the same day – opened the door for Toronto, where Jimmy is now serving three months in an interim position with the local association. God's re-routes bring greatest blessings.

Lee Truax, a retired nurse with several one to two week volunteer experiences under her belt, has said that Missions Mobilization of Mississippi Baptists is an answer to her prayers.

Lee will be going on a one-month volunteer experience to an unreached city. In the process of Lee's volunteer experiences God has planned for her to attend International Service Corps candidate screening conference in June.

Upon return from her one-month assignment through Mississippi Baptists, she will go to the International Mission

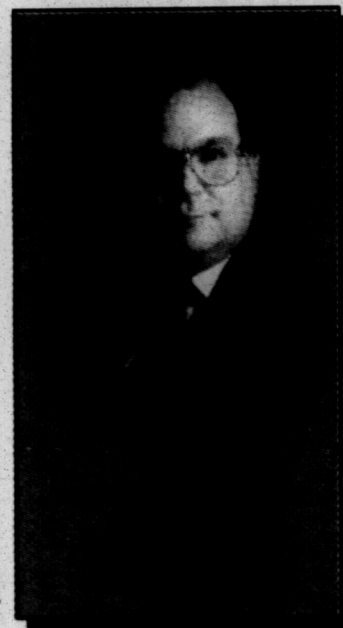
Board's Missionary Learning Center, Rockville, Virginia. She will then accept a three year international assignment.

In the future, upon their return from an unreached city, you will meet and hear the story of Ray and Fay Huff. The Huffs are on a three-month mission experience connected by the Missions Mobilization Department.

These are but small glimpses of the numerous Mississippi Baptists engaged as volunteers. Notice their varied backgrounds – brick mason, school teacher, homemaker, psychologist, nurse, pastor.

They all share in common the tap of God on the shoulder saying, "You could volunteer."

We only have one mission trip – life. Where will your life's mission experiences happen?



Global opportunities vary

By Clay Moss, consultant
MBCB Missions Mobilization

God continues to be on the move globally. International Mission Board families are planting churches in Europe while other families prepare to minister to Arab immigrants moving into European cities.

In Canada, there is a family engaged in multiethnic ministry throughout the city of Toronto while praying for other Southern Baptist families to join their team.

In Mississippi and other states, families and students have become a part of church plant movements targeting urban areas, along with ethnic and native populations.

In numerous open and closed countries around the world, families and individuals are serving as agriculturists, coaches, contractors, doctors, lawyers, mechanics, professors, researchers, secretaries, teachers, and a host of other professions.

Some plan on serving in their positions long term, while others may serve temporary assignments lasting a few months.

Though their job or ministry descriptions vary, they all have one thing in common. All these wonderful and dedicated people are from Mississippi.

Missions life is not limited to a few people with specific skills. Whatever talent God has given you professionally or ministerially, he can use it on the mission field.

We're not going to ask you if you're called to be on mission with God. If you're a born again Christian, the call to missions automatically comes with the package.

Our Missions Mobilization office can assist you in locating where God is on the move and where you might prayerfully plug in.



Tiffany Folse, IMB journeyman, University of Southern Mississippi graduate, works in a Nitenga Village in Burkina Faso, Africa.

Annie's legacy thrives in Baltimore

By Paul Harrell, consultant
MBCB Missions Mobilization

Mississippi Baptists, along with other Southern Baptists, have great appreciation for the legacy left to us by Miss Annie Armstrong. She began her ministry in the inner city of Baltimore, Md. Much of her early work was in the harbor area.

Today, as many volunteers go to minister in the Inner Harbor area, there is an excitement that youth and adults may be walking in the tracks of Miss Annie Armstrong.

The Inner Harbor area today is made up of business people, tourists, homeless people, employees of hotels, restaurants, entertainment and sports industries, and residents of expensive housing that now encircle the harbor. Every ministry initiated has to take into consideration the great diversity in this area, its people, and their lifestyles.

After being there and ministering in the Inner Harbor area, most volunteers wish they had known Miss Annie. She was a great lady, an incredible missionary, innovative and creative. Volunteers go to the same places she did, not in the same way but for the same reasons.

We are awed by the fact that God leads many volunteers from Mississippi each year to walk in her steps as they engage in such ministries in the Inner Harbor area.

The partnership with the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware allows us not only to minister in Baltimore but also to be strategically involved in every association of this convention. Their 11 associations are linked with 18 of our associations.

Out of this relationship many church-to-church linkages have been formed. As of today, 12 new churches have been birthed since January 1. Other new starts are in the developing stage and will be launched later this year.

It is a blessing and a challenge for Mississippi Baptists to be in a partnership with Maryland/Delaware. Currently, 22 teams are scheduled to go this year. If the Missions Mobilization Department can be of assistance to you in providing information or processing your next mission trip, call us at 601-292-3398, or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 7748-1651, ext. 398.



USM students "up close and personal" in Africa

The University of Southern Mississippi 2002 Baptist Student Union mission trip to Burkina Faso, Africa, included a 16 member team who worked in the villages of Zomkalga and Nintenga with the Marene people. The group was assisted in part through the volunteer assistance section of the Margaret Lackey State Mission offering.



Above left: Cory Wilson (left), IMB journeyman, University of Mississippi graduate, and member of Gillsburg Church, Osyka, Miss., is the first person to work with the Marene tribe.

Above right: Lloyd Lunceford with Zomkalga children excitedly eager to play ball.

Left: Quinten Williams of Petal, embraces a Marene child.



Above: Quinten Williams (front), Petal, Miss., demonstrates serving the volleyball as Cory Wilson and a group of the Marene look on.

Below: Cory Wilson (left), IMB Journeyman (left) and Toby Barker (right), Central Church, Meridian talk with children. Toby remained as a BSU summer missionary.



Above: University of Southern Miss. puppet show draws a large crowd of both children and adults. Kris Walters, associate Baptist Student Union director at the University of Southern Miss., takes pictures of the group.

Left: Lloyd Lunceford, Baptist Student Union director, University of Southern Miss., has fun with a Marene child.

"Through hands-on mission opportunities, student's catch the vision of God's heart for the nations."

*—Lloyd Lunceford
BSU director, USM*

Mississippi Baptists minister in multiple ways in Northeast cities

By Ken Lyle, consultant
MBCB Missions Mobilization

When you see the headlines and stories which come from cities like Boston, Philadelphia, and New York, what do you think?

No doubt your mind is immediately filled with images of high rise buildings, millions of faceless people rushing toward the American dream, abject poverty, neighboring with profane affluence, neon lights temporarily camouflaging filthy streets, and contaminating crime which vividly illustrates the sinfulness of human beings.

Such thoughts are true; they are reality based, but they do not represent a comprehensive portrait of these great urban areas which have become

Strategic Focus Cities for the ministry of Christ through Southern Baptists.

When I think of Boston, Philadelphia, and New York, the images mentioned above become windows through which I also see new congregations being planted, hundreds of college students in Bible studies, human needs being met in the name of Jesus, church leaders being trained and empowered, and weary Christians being encouraged and energized.

More specifically, I see Baptists from Mississippi right smack in the middle of the "harassed and helpless" crowds on whom Jesus has compassion.

I see our mobilized volunteers join Baptist sisters and brothers who live and work in these cities every

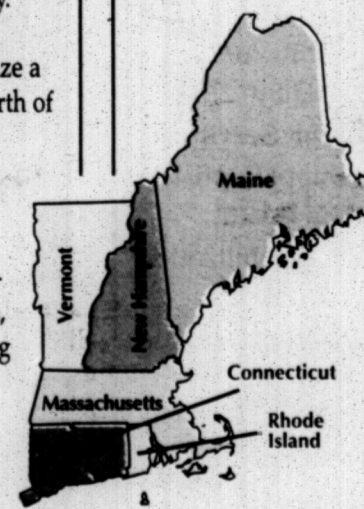
day to bring God's Good News to those who "are like sheep without a shepherd" (Matthew 9:36). Look with me at these snapshots:

- Students from Blue Mountain College, Hinds, Holmes, and Itawamba Community Colleges sharing Jesus with children and teens in Philadelphia.
- Students from Mississippi College helping to plant a new church in New York City.
- Students from the University of Southern Mississippi and Mississippi State University returning to Boston to follow-up on ministries God began through them a year ago.
- Dollars from Mississippi helping to start a new Japanese congregation in Boston.
- US-2 missionaries, Jason and Melanie

Hardage (from Mississippi) establishing collegiate ministry at the State University of New York at Albany.

- Good Hope Church (Winston Association) working to revitalize a struggling congregation just north of Philadelphia.
- First Church, Jackson (Metro Association) partnering with a church plant in Boston.
- Retired international missionaries, Tom and Gloria Thurman, working for nine months among Asian people groups in New York City.

God is at work drawing people to Himself. Yet, His laborers are still few compared to the need. "Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into the harvest field" (Matthew 9:38).



What are Acts 1:8 Key Churches and Global Priority Churches?

By Ken Rhodes, director
MBCB Missions Mobilization



(From right to left) June and Tom Nolen, coordinators for Mississippi Missions Mobilization volunteer teams in Ukraine, hand out Bibles in Bobrink, Ukraine, to the pastor of the local house church and his wife.

ACTS 1:8 KEY CHURCHES - WHAT ARE THEY?

Key churches are those serious about becoming a significant part in a church planting movement throughout North America.

Only 5.8% of churches are reproducing themselves. It requires 4,000 new churches each year to keep the present church-to-population ratio in North America. Last year Southern Baptists began 1,400 new churches.

Individual churches or clusters of churches can become Acts 1:8 key churches reproducing themselves in North America. The Mississippi network provides encouragement and facilitation of reproducing churches in North America.

Many Mississippi churches need to consider reproducing themselves by starting a new church within Mississippi or North America.

WHAT IS A GLOBAL PRIORITY CHURCH?

According to the International Mission Board, a Global Priority Church is a church meeting the following eight criteria or that is willing to move toward doing so:

1. Prioritizes missions and provides missions staff.
 2. Prays for missionaries and the unreached world.
 3. Provides missions education, information, events and displays.
 4. Promotes growing missions giving.
 5. Produces the missionaries for now and tomorrow.
 6. Participates in short-term missions projects.
 7. Partnership in missions efforts by adopting unreached peoples.
 8. Personalizes missions through adopting IMB personnel.
- The Mississippi network exists to encourage and facilitate global churches as they play a significant part in reaching the unreached 1.8 million.



(From right to left) Butch Knight, a member of First Church, Poplarville, accompanied by Mike Ray IMB missionary to Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine, talks with a group of young Ukrainian boys during a recent volunteer mission experience. Mike's wife, Linda (not pictured) is from Poplarville, Miss. Her home church is First Church, Poplarville.

Global Networks

What is a Global Network?

- Churches and associations developing partnering relationships globally facilitated by the Missions Mobilization staff

Who can be a part of a Global Network?

- All Global Priority Churches
- Acts 1:8 - Key churches
- Churches interested in deepening missions involvement

What is the purpose of a Global Network?

- Encouragement/support
- Mentoring
- Advocacy

What are the emphasis areas?

- Connecting with unreached people groups
- Connecting with unreached cities
- Connecting with missionaries with Mississippi relationships
- Existing/natural connections

What are the strategies?

- Churches and Associations
 - Regional Discovery Meetings
 - Prayer/Discernment
 - Journey Preparation
 - Connecting Journey
 - North American church planting connection
- State
 - Developing a comprehensive missions mobilization database
 - Celebrating mobilization successes
 - Recruiting potential churches/associations
 - Orientation training
 - Equipping team leaders
 - Covenant making (include endvision, exit, renewal)
 - Mission connections
 - Mentoring relationships
 - Connecting with projects or individuals

The network is in its early beginning and you can help build it. The appropriate title to call such a network in Mississippi is yet to be determined.

If you are interested in being a part of such an awesome group, contact Ken Rhodes at krhodes@mbcb.org or call 601-292-3398 or (800) 748-1651, ext. 398.

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about future
mission opportunities.
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Jackson, MS 39205-0530
(800) 748-1651, ext. 398
(601) 292-3398
krhodes@mbcb.org

Missions Mobilization Celebration

First Baptist Church, Jackson
Celebration Banquet, November 15, 2002

Yvonne Bruce, Texas - speaker
Former missionary to unreached people group

Mississippi Baptist Convention Board Building
November 16, 2002

- Partnership displays
- Testimonies • Fieldside coordinator reports
- Fellowship • Mission speakers

For more information, please contact the MBCB Missions Mobilization Department.



JUST FOR THE RECORD

The teachers of **Antioch Baptist Learning Center (ABLC), Columbus**, taught the love for God and country by setting examples for the children. The children learned about the

foundation of America being built on God and about citizenship, freedom, and the people who have helped to gain America's freedom. They paraded throughout the premises waving American flags, throwing red, white, and blue confetti and using instruments which they had made themselves. The children sang patriotic songs of old and ended with the pledge of allegiance. It touched hearts to witness the young children giving honor to God and America. A special thank you to the teachers of ABLC whose teaching skills and love of God put this together.

GA Recognition was held June 1 at **Oakhurst Church, Clarksdale**. Pictured (from left) are Mallory Rybolt, Mandy Elliott, Connor Keenum, Marli Sullivan, Melinda Daniels, Judith Pollard, Adrian Dill, Ashley Kate Williams, Meriwether Bass, Elisabeth Pollard, Kalie King, Lauren Hall, Molly Stillions, Jayme Hollingsworth, Ashlyn Jones, Maggy Denham, Laura Holt, Rivers Landrum, Warner Wilbanks, Christiana Upchurch, Shelley Balentine, Claire Gore, Morgan Hall, Amanda Foster, Stacy Hale, Jessica Saucier, and Emily Guthrie.



GAs of Oakhurst Church, Clarksdale

Dick and Mel Tunney will be in concert of praise at Alta Woods Church, Jackson, Aug. 11, at 5:30 p.m. For additional information, call (601) 372-8651.



Children of Antioch Church, Columbus

GAs and RAs of **First Church, Myrick**, collected 166 items for the Pregnancy Crisis

Center in Laurel during May and June. Pictured (from left, top row) are Alex Landrum, Alesha Watts, Lacey Stewart, Brittany West, Hunter Langley, B. J. Watts, and Jasimine Smith; (bottom row) Brennan Whatley, Josh Watts, Bubba Landrum, Brandon Connerly, Mollie Tidwell, and William Lamar.



Myrick Church GAs and RAs

First Church, Batesville, will host an Evangelism Bible Conference, Aug. 4-7. James E. Messer Sr., staff evangelist of Cypress Shores Church, Mobile, Ala., will conduct services from noon-12:45 p.m. on Monday and Tuesday. John Sullivan, executive secretary for Florida Baptist Convention, will preach the morning and night services on Sunday. Other speakers are Junior Hill, Hartselle, Ala., Monday night; Bob Pitman, Memphis, Tenn., Tuesday night; and Jim McNeil, St. Louis, Mo., Wednesday night. Phil Willis, Baton Rouge, La., will be music director for the conference. Evening services will begin at 6:30 p.m. Alan Kilgore is pastor of First Church, Batesville. For additional information, call (662) 563-7655.

Highland Church, Natchez, will host The Crownsmen and The Chosen in a gospel singing July 21 at 5 p.m. Both groups are originally from Liberty. For more information, call (601) 446-6181 or 446-5571.

Thomastown Church, Thomastown, will observe its sesquicentennial celebration with worship at 11 a.m. on Aug. 4. Lunch will be served in fellowship hall. At 1:30 p.m. the afternoon feature will include singing and special recognitions. The Bell Sisters, Lisa Moore, Diane Floyd, Donna Shelley, and Joy Terry will present special music. Dan West is interim pastor.

Mid-Delta Association, Cleveland, held a reception at Roundaway Church, Doddsville, on June 23 in honor of **Bobby Douglas**, who became the association missions director on June 1. Douglas recently served as pastor of First Church, Columbus. Pictured (from left) are Bob Hill, moderator, Mid-Delta Association; and Cynthia and Bobby Douglas.



Hill and the Douglas'

North Winona Church, Winona, will honor W. M. Hull Jr., retired pastor, on July 27. The day will begin with a time of fun and worship in the worship center at 3 p.m. and later move to the fellowship hall for a reception. Churches he pastored from 1936-1986 were Eskridge, Shiloh, Prospect, Hebron, Scotland, Pine Forest, Mulberry, Hickory Grove, Calvary, New Bethel, and Liberty. All of these churches were in Carroll and Montgomery Associations.

Oak Grove Church, Lake, will celebrate its centennial, Aug. 4, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Guest speakers are Marshall Lum, Carthage; and Mike Everett, Forest. Others on program will be John Alumbaugh, Martha Anne Durr, and Hilda Bailey. Keith McGee is pastor.

Clear Branch Church, Florence, is sponsoring a Back-to-School Youth Rally at Hemphill Park, Florence, on July 31 at 7 p.m. Music will be provided by Ninth Hour, a Christian band, and Alan Loving of First Church, Jackson, will be the speaker. The purpose of this rally is to help youth make a fresh start this school year with Jesus Christ. For additional information, call (601) 845-6688.



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4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him. *(I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)*

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

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Seminary prof Owen dies July 8

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Longtime Southern Seminary professor John Joseph "Red Top" Owens, known for his mastery of biblical languages as well as the nickname inspired by his hair color, died July 8. He was 83 years of age.



Owens

Owens was professor of Old Testament for more than four decades at Southern Seminary, teaching until his retirement in 1984. He continued teaching as a senior professor and emeritus professor years after his retirement.

He was proficient in at least 10 foreign languages, but his specialty was the Semitic languages — especially Hebrew. After retirement he wrote Analytical Key to the Old Testament, a massive four-volume set still used by Southern Seminary students. In it he parses every Hebrew word in the Old Testament. Owens was also the author of the Broadman Bible Commentaries on Numbers, Daniel, and Job.

STAFF CHANGES

Wade Church, Pascagoula, has called **Philip Price** as minister of education and youth, effective June 23. He previously served as associate pastor at First Church, Stockton, Ala. This is his third call to Wade Church. He served Wade Church as minister of youth and music, 1994-1998, and music minister, 1999. Price received his education at William Carey College and New Orleans Seminary.



Ball

Raymond A. Ball, music and ministries pastor at Highland Colony Church, Ridgeland, will retire on July 31. He will be honored at the church, Sunday, July 28, at 10:30 a.m., a celebration in the sanctuary at 11:30 a.m., and a fellowship meal at noon. He will complete almost 50 years of ministry in Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, and Texas. Ball, a graduate of Mississippi College and Southwestern Seminary, is available for supply work, revivals, singing engagements, concerts, and interim positions. He can be contacted at (601) 853-4355.

BAPTIST COLLEGE AND SEMINARY NEWS

Lloyd E. Roberts, Vice President for Business Affairs, has been named Senior Vice President for Administration and Chief Financial Officer for Mississippi College (MC). He joined the faculty of MC as Professor of Economics and Chair of the Department of Business Administration in 1982. In 1984, he received the Distinguished Professor of the Year Award at MC. In 1995, Roberts became Dean of the School of Business and remained in that position until 2000 when he was named Vice President for Business Affairs. Roberts served as Interim President of MC from July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002. Roberts, a native of Moss Point, received his Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Mississippi in 1974.



Roberts

Roberts will fund a new School of Nursing Building. "One of the goals of the Asbury Foundation from its inception was to continue to support and help qualified healthcare personnel for this area of our state," explained William K. Ray, the foundation's president and chief executive officer.

Mary Dean Hollis, left, a 1950 graduate, was named 2002 Alumna of the Year by the Blue Mountain College Alumnae Association during the May meeting. She began her professional career as a student secretary to President Lawrence T. Lowrey and later served as secretary to President Wilfred C. Tyler until 1963. After working in Memphis for a couple of years, she returned to Blue Mountain College as an associate in the business office in 1965 and served as business officer of the college until her retirement on Aug. 31, 1999. Hollis

was selected by the Board of Trustees as the school's 1991-1992 Most Outstanding Staff Member. She is a member of Chalybeate Church. Bettye R. Coward, president, is pictured with Hollis.



Arrington

Teresa R. Arrington was selected to participate this June in the annual reading and scoring of the College Board's AP Examinations in Spanish. Each year the AP Program, sponsored by the College Board, gives hundreds of thousands of capable high school students an opportunity to take rigorous college-level courses and examinations and, based on their exam performance, to receive credit and/or advanced placement when they enter college.



Hollis and Coward

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VBS DATES

Grandview, Pearl: July 21-25; Sunday, 5:30-8:00 p.m.; Mon.-Thurs., 6:30 p.m., supper, and 7-9 p.m. Wade Chappell, pastor.

Gunter Road, Florence: July 21-24; Sunday, 6-8:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 6:30-8:30 p.m.; Gene Jordan, pastor.

Providence Church, Grenada, held VBS June 10-14.



VBS participants of Providence Church, Grenada



First, Sartatia: homecoming, July 21, 10:45 a.m.; revival, July 22-24, 7:30 nightly; Gene Speight, former pastor, preaching at homecoming and revival; Bill and Martha Martin, music.

Mt. Pisgah, Sandhill: July 28-31; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Scott McDowell, Rhinehart, La., evangelist; Jan Jones, Mt. Pisgah Church, music; Andy Delaney, pastor.

REVIVAL DATES

Summerlin, McComb, evangelist; Mike and Angela Britt, Brookhaven, music; Johnnie Place, pastor.

Liberty, Newton: July 21-24; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Mike Everett, associational missions director, Newton and Scott counties, guest speaker; J. B. Costilow, pastor.

Jayess, Jayess: July 28-31; Sunday, Sunday School, 9:30 a.m., worship, 10:45 a.m. with dinner to follow; Sunday-Wed., 7:30 p.m.; Malcom Ellis, evangelist; Lonnie Case, pastor.

Calvary, Columbus: July 21-24; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 12:15 p.m. and 7 p.m.; Ben Yarber, evangelist; Randy Tolleson, music; Roy D. Hawkins, pastor.

Anding, Benton: July 28-31; Sunday, 10:45 a.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Andy May, evangelist; Glyn Martin, music; Joe K. Hill, pastor.

Longview (Pontotoc): July 21-25; Sunday-Thursday, 11 a.m., noon meal, and 7 p.m.; Gene Douglas, evangelist; Johnny Sykes, pastor.

Jerusalem (Attala): July 21-24; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7:30 p.m.; John Ballard, pastor of Zama Church (Attala), evangelist; Johnny Parks, pastor.

Kolola Springs, Caledonia: July 28-31; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Danny Dodds, Serrupta, La., evangelist.

Mt. Zion (Simpson): July 22-26; Charles Burnham, Drycreek Church, evangelist;

Rick Holifield, music; Joel Eavenson, pastor.

First, Mount Olive: July 21-24; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Kermit McGregor, evangelist; Paul Padgett, music; Gerald Buckley, pastor.

Grace Southern, Calhoun City: July 28-Aug. 2; Sunday, homecoming, 10:30 a.m., message by Carl Morris, pastor; lunch; 1:30 p.m., recognition of former pastors, message by Lee Dillard, pastor of Shiloh Church, Calhoun County; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.

Mount Carmel (Smith): Aug. 4-7; 11 a.m. service; lunch following morning service; afternoon service; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; James T. Maddox, Mize, evangelist; Charley Cook, pastor.

Longview, Starkville: Aug. 4-7; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Bobby Douglas, Columbus, evangelist; Chase McGinnis, Starkville, music; Steve Huber, pastor.

Rock Bluff, Morton: Aug. 4-7; homecoming, Sunday; revival, Mon.-Wed.; Scott Walters, Line Creek Church, evangelist; Donnie Stuart, pastor.

First, Mathiston: Aug. 4-9; Sunday, 10 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Rickey Blythe, Flora, evangelist; Steve and Becky Carver, Mathiston, music; Lowell D. Ingram, pastor.

Clear Springs (Yalobusha): Aug. 11-14; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; James Barlow, pastor, preaching; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m., Kevin Jackson, Water Valley, bringing the messages.

Partial-birth abortion ban moving on

WASHINGTON (BP) -- A U.S. House of Representatives subcommittee has approved a new version of a ban on partial-birth abortion. The Constitution Subcommittee forwarded the Partial-birth Abortion Ban Act, H.R. 4965, to the House Judiciary Committee by an 8-3 vote July 11. The bill would prohibit an abortion method that involves the killing of a nearly totally delivered baby normally in the fifth or sixth month of pregnancy.

The legislation is not the first time Congress has sought to prohibit the procedure, but it marks a calculated response to a negative ruling by the Supreme Court in 2000. In *Stenberg v. Carhart*, the high court voted 5-4 to strike down a Nebraska ban on partial-birth abortion. The new version seeks to address the court's contention the Nebraska law could have been interpreted to cover other abortion methods, as well as the justices' determination the ban needed an exception for maternal health reasons.

Congress twice has approved a partial-birth ban, but President Clinton vetoed the measures in both 1996 and 1997. The House gained the two-thirds majority necessary to override the vetoes, but the Senate fell short.

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HOMECOMING - Ireland, Lakeview Baptist Church 50th Anniversary Sunday, September 22, 2002; services begin at 10 a.m., dinner and afternoon singing, S.B. Boyett, Pastor.

MS POSITIONS AVAILABLE

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MINISTER OF STUDENTS NEEDED with some musical background preferred. Full-time position. Send resume to: North Winona Baptist Church, 602 Alberta Drive, Winona, MS 38967 or fax to (662) 283-5004.

BRIAR HILL BAPTIST CHURCH, Florence, MS, is seeking a God-called man for pastor. If you feel that God may be leading you, please contact the church office at (601) 845-6843, and we will send you a summary description of the church, after which

you may submit a resume if you feel led to consider this place of service.

TOPEKA BAPTIST CHURCH located 12 miles south of Monticello is seeking a bi-vocational minister of music. Primary responsibilities include directing music during regular worship services, and special music/drama presentations during the year. Send resumes to: Topeka Baptist Church, 807 China Grove Road, Jayess, MS 39641.

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RURAL CHURCH located 25 miles north of Jackson, is seeking a part-time minister of music. Primary responsibilities will include music direction during mid-week rehearsals, regular church worship services, and special music/drama presentations during the year. Send resumes to: MUSIC COUNCIL, P.O. Box 67, Benton, MS 39040.

NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH, Lauderdale Association is seeking a bi-vocational minister of music. For more information please call the church office at (601) 693-4490 or send information to: New Hope Baptist Church 6573 Hwy 145 South, Meridian, MS 39301.

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FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

God wants me to be humble

1 Samuel 18:1-19:7

By Ruth V. Gamble

One of the finest characteristics of a spiritually mature person is humility. This choice Fruit of the Spirit is also identified as "meekness" or "gentleness." For many people "meekness" is considered undesirable because it is equated with being a "doormat," "a pushover," or one easily intimidated. Understanding what humility is and what it is not will help us see why this Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) is one which God expects to characterize his people.

Unger's Bible Dictionary defines humility as "that grace which makes one think of himself no more highly than he ought to think (Romans 12:3) but does not demand undue self-depreciation; [it] is the equivalent of meekness." Nelson's New Illustrated Bible

Dictionary adds: [Humility is] "...a freedom from arrogance that grows out of the recognition that all we have and are comes from God." The KJV translates this word in Galatians as "meekness." The Greek word is *prautes* and is translated "gentleness" in most other versions. It describes a wild horse which had been tamed so that its strength was under control. It is the word which Jesus used of himself in Matthew 11:29 (KJV) when he said, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." We certainly do not think of Jesus as weak, but one who had great strength, used with compassion, to help others.

The secular worldview considers a person who is humble as one who is easily manipulated, spineless, and weak. In a societ-

where aggressiveness and assertiveness are to be desired, humility would seem to invite others to take advantage or bully.

In the biblical worldview humility is most desirable. Answering his apostles' question concerning who was "greatest in the Kingdom," Jesus held a child and taught that gentleness grows from humility, such as that seen in the trusting, forgiving, teachable spirit of a child (Matthew 18:1-4). Jesus himself proved the courage and strength of humility by taking the form of a servant, becoming a man, humbling himself to be obedient unto the death of the cross! (Philippians 2:7-8).

Humility is not a New Testament concept only. 2 Chronicles 7:14 commands God's people to "humble themselves and pray" so that he would forgive, and heal their land. The prophet Micah emphatically told God's people that God had showed them what was good, that he required of them that they

act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with him (Micah 6:8). Proverbs 15:33 reminds us that "The fear of the Lord teaches a man wisdom, and humility comes before honor."

Exodus 18:1-27 points out that Moses' greatness was undoubtedly a reflection of his "meek" or "humble" spirit. His relationship with his father-in-law, Jethro, demonstrates his teachable, submissive spirit, enabling him to be the strong leader he became. After leading the children of Israel from Egypt, Moses was met in the wilderness by Jethro, accompanied by his wife and sons. Jethro observed Moses spending many hours, "from morning unto evening" listening as judge for the people. Jethro wisely and tactfully suggested, "You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone." He advised Moses to appoint capable, God-fearing, trustworthy men to assume some of the responsibility of judging. Moses was to teach them the "way to live and the duties to perform." They would become judges over

thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. Only the most important cases would be brought to Moses. And the people would be satisfied! Moses could have interpreted Jethro's advice as harsh criticism, or meddling, but we are told that "Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said." That's humility—and wisdom!

Other incidents in Moses' life illustrate his God-given strength while accenting his humility. Consider God's punishment on Aaron and Miriam when they jealously accused Moses of being "high-handed" with his authority. Moses humbly allowed God to take care of his reputation (Numbers 12:1-15). Dathan, Korah, and Abiram also felt God's judgment when they dared to oppose Moses and Aaron.

Numbers 12:3 concludes that Moses was strong and dynamic, but humble. "Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth."

Gamble is a member of Slayden Church, Slayden.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Bitterness

2 Samuel 14:1-33

By Bart Walker

Guilt is a powerful motivator for change. In the two instances where we have seen David confronted by people with the fact that he was guilty (once by Nathan the prophet and now by the "wise woman" of Tekoa), those people used parables to illustrate the nature of his guilt and his need for repentance.

We will first consider what God's intended use for guilt seems to be according to Scripture. In Nathan's confrontation with David it appears that the purpose of guilt was to bring about repentance. When the "wise woman" of Tekoa confronted David with his guilt of being unreconciled with Absalom in this week's lesson, what is absent is any mention of repentance, only a partial change in the course of his action.

I believe that the lack of repentance on David's part when confronted by the "wise woman" of Tekoa gives us reason to look toward underlying and unresolved bitterness between David and Absalom as the culprit in the lasting strife between them. We must also consider that these events are a fulfillment of 2 Samuel 12:11 where God promises to "raise up evil against you from your own household." We call to mind here that God is not the author of sin, but his restraining grace protects us from many of the possible effects of sin, and, if removed, causes us to experience in greater quantity the effects of our own doing.

Joab takes on the task of encouraging reconciliation by trying to produce a sense of guilt in David through the use

of an "outsider" to play upon David's already sensitive spirit toward Absalom. Joab arranges for a meeting of the "wise woman" from Tekoa and King David so that she can use a parable to relate to the situation between David and Amnon.

As the woman pleads her fictitious case before David, she illustrates the situation in such a way as to involve David's compassionate heart in the story of her two sons. She shows that if the blood-letting does not end, then her family will be without heir, support, and legacy. She then turns the story to David's family, implying that the continued strife and vengeance in his family will lead to the death of his heirs.

As David's heart is pricked by guilt, we see him moving toward reconciliation in vv. 19-24.

David and Absalom are missing full reconciliation as the story progresses. David, with some apparent bitterness still brewing in his heart toward Absalom, denies Absalom the privilege of full

restoration in the presence of the king and sends him away to go to his own house.

Absalom, who is recorded as the most handsome in all of Israel, endures two years of unmet hopes of restoration and finally becomes frustrated enough to force Joab (who would not respond to his requests) to see him. He accomplishes this by setting Joab's field on fire.

David hears from Joab about Absalom's request and grants Absalom the honor of the king's presence. When they met one another, there was a public display of David's grace and Absalom's repentance but apparently too late or too little. The damage was not truly healed.

In the case of both Absalom and David, their sorrow did not produce true repentance that is necessary to restore the relationship. Each only apparently sought to relieve their guilt through something other than repentance...which means that the guilt and the bitterness remained unresolved.

The story is told that in one particular institution for the mentally impaired, one of the

tests for final release into society was composed of a patient's introduction into a room in which the drain on a sink had been stopped up with an object while the water was left running so that the sink had filled up and had begun to overflow. The patient was sent into the room with a mop and a bucket. If the patient simply continued to mop and mop without realizing the cause of the overflow and doing something about it, he was deemed unfit for returning to society. However, if he moved to turn off the sink and unstop the drain and then cleaned up the water, he was found fit for re-introduction into society.

We, in our relationships are often like the patient considered unfit for re-introduction when we spend our time mopping up the fallout from our bitterness rather than going to the source of our bitterness, turning off the faucet, forgiving, unstopping the drain and then cleaning up the mess. Is there water running into a clogged drain in your life?

Walker is pastor of Parkway Church, Natchez.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing. No articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats,

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Please make articles concise. Include the **who, what, when, where** details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

THE VILLAGE VIEW



Ronny E. Robinson, Executive Director

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Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of **The Village View** is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

MAY 1 - 31, 2002

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Baptists answer needs after wildfire crisis

DENVER (BP and local reports) — Fire season came early to drought-stricken Colorado this year, sparking major wildfires across the state in recent weeks. As towns and communities have been thrust into crisis, Southern Baptists have been on hand to offer help.

From hot meals to hugs, Baptists from Texas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas have joined with Coloradoans to minister through disaster relief efforts.

unique ministry role. "Instead, it's a big team effort."

That cooperative spirit has defined Southern Baptists' disaster relief efforts for years. The convention is well-known to relief agencies as having the resources and the people to respond quickly in times of crisis.

When the fires erupted in Colorado, both ARC and the Salvation Army contacted the North American Mission Board (NAMB) disaster relief office in Alpharetta, Ga., to request Southern Baptist response teams. Not only would hundreds of firefighters be converging on Colorado's forests, but also the number of evacuees forced to leave their homes could reach into the thousands.

The need for hot meals would overwhelm local resources if help wasn't called in from elsewhere.

The NAMB office, in turn, contacted the Baptist state conventions in Texas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas. Each of those states then activated a feeding unit from within their state. Individuals who have been trained and certified in Southern Baptist disaster relief efforts were called and teams were assembled.

Within hours of the initial phone calls from relief agencies, Southern Baptists were on the road to Colorado.

At the height of recent efforts, Southern Baptists prepared about 4,000 meals a day at three different locations around Colorado. The ministry provided hot meals for evacuees, firefighters, Forest Service workers, police, and others involved.

On June 8, a group of Texas Baptists arrived in Canon City to assist with efforts relating to the Iron Mountain fire. The Top O' Texas disaster relief unit set up its operation at First Church of Canon City and served three meals a day to victims of that fire.

"They were able to minister to those who have lost basically everything — their clothes, their house, their vehicles," pastor Morgan Kerr said. "They were able to provide basic needs for them."

Just a few days later, as the Iron Mountain fire was brought under control and the team wrapped up operations in Canon City, the Hayman Fire erupted, almost overnight. The Texas team was transferred to Castle Rock and began serving about 1,500 meals a day at that fire's command center.

The Top O' Texas team arrived with a large trailer containing food, supplies and a self-supporting kitchen.

"We always travel with

enough food for 10,000 meals," said Tim Willis of the Texas team. "At this location, the Salvation Army is providing the food and we're providing the people power to prepare the meals."

The team has the capability of providing 20,000 meals per day and could operate in locations without electricity or running water, Willis said.

Most of the team members from Texas were able to make the trip to Colorado on short notice.

"Plains, Texas, is a farming community," Willis said. "So most of our team is self-employed, although some of them did use vacation to come to Colorado."



CLEAN FINISH — Volunteers from the Top O' Texas Southern Baptist disaster relief team wash dishes following a long day of cooking 1,500 meals at the Douglas County Fairgrounds in Castle Rock, Colo., the northern command post for the firefighting efforts of the Hayman Fire. (BP photo by Allen Spencer)

from Oklahoma arrived on June 15 to meet the growing needs for help as the Hayman Fire continued to grow.

At the height of the Hayman Fire, efforts to fight the blaze were being coordinated through three major command posts because of the size of the fire. The Oklahomans' operation in Monument provided a central location near all three of the fire's command posts and near many of the evacuees.

Working under the direction of the American Red Cross, the team provided about 1,000 meals a day for firefighters and other officials working near the front lines of the fire. The team prepared the meals from their mobile kitchen in the parking lot of the Monument church and the Red Cross delivered the meals to command posts near the fire.

"We plan the meals and the Red Cross provides the food for us," said Gene Jones, leader of the Oklahoma team.

Though the team is made up of volunteers from varying walks of life, and most only got a very short notice before leaving for Colorado, they were organized and ready to begin working wherever they were assigned.

"We have a head cook and everyone else pitches in and helps with the meals," said Mark Smith, a former Colorado pastor who's now living in Oklahoma, "and when the Red Cross returns with the empty containers, we all help clean those up and it's time to do it all over again."

Like the teams from Texas and Oklahoma, the Arkansas team is a self-supporting unit.

"It's one of our smaller units," said Arkansan Rusty Lynn.



FAMILY'S THANKS — A Colorado Springs-area family displays hand-painted posters of thanks for those helping battle the Hayman Fire in a visit with Oklahoma Southern Baptist disaster relief volunteers stationed at Monument Hill Church in Monument, Colo. (BP photo by Allen Spencer)

Some of the team members also were retired, but all of them worked long hours ministering in Colorado.

"We arrive on site at 2:00 a.m. to prepare breakfast and make sack lunches," said Kim Willis, Tim's wife. For the Willises, it was a family affair. Their daughter Kayla also made the trip to serve in Colorado.

Just down the road a few miles, in the parking lot of Monument Hill Church, SBC, in Monument, Colo., a 13-member disaster relief team



SOUTHERN COOKING — Volunteers from an Arkansas disaster relief team fill containers with chicken and dumplings for firefighters and evacuees amid the Missionary Ridge Fire in southwestern Colorado. American Red Cross workers delivered the hot meals from the Arkansas team's self-contained trailer unit at Bayfield High School. (BP photo by Allen Spencer)

While no Mississippi Baptist disaster relief units were activated for the wildfires that have swept through portions of the western United States, a Mississippi Baptist disaster relief child care unit is currently on station in Kerrville after massive flooding across that state.

In communities across Colorado, the American Red Cross (ARC) and the Salvation Army have been coordinating disaster relief efforts for evacuees, firefighters, and others involved in the crises.

In Canon City, Castle Rock, Monument, and Bayfield, Southern Baptists from other states have joined forces with the relief agencies and local churches to meet needs and minister to victims.

As Southern Baptists work under the auspices of the ARC or the Salvation Army, their distinctive yellow hats and the yellow Southern Baptist Disaster Relief logo have become recognizable. Though their efforts are mainly in cooking and meal preparation, the "official" look of the Southern Baptist teams opens doors for ministry.

"People will approach us and ask for directions or for information," said Maxine Freeman of Arkansas, "and we get to help them."

"It's not a competition with the other agencies," said Rusty Lynn, also from Arkansas, describing their

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FSY EFMXSZ, KTO KXBO XE

WARWXRROY, FSY KTO

CXSZGB GW ZGY XE FX

TFSY: LODOSK MO, FSY

VORXOIO KTO ZGEDOR.

BFLC GSO: WXWKOOS

Clue: W=F

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Luke Twenty-Four: Forty Five.